

**POTTSTOWN  
BOROUGH AND SCHOOL BOARD  
JOINT MEETING MINUTES  
January 22, 2018**

The Joint Borough and Pottstown School District Board of Directors meeting was held on Monday, January 22, 2018 at 7:30 PM in the Cafeteria of the Pottstown High School. Members present were School Board Directors: President, Amy Francis; Vice President, Ms. Katina Bearden; Mr. John Armato, Mr. Kurt Heidel, Mrs. Susan Lawrence, Mr. Raymond Rose, Mr. Ron Williams. Borough Council: President, Councilor Dan Weand; Vice-President, Councilor Carol Kulp; Councilor Ryan Proscal, Councilor Donald Lebedynsky, Councilor Dennis Arms, Councilor Rita Paez, Mayor Stephanie Henrick. Also present were Superintendent, Stephen Rodriguez; Business Administrator, Maureen Jampo; Interim Borough Manager, Justin Keller, members of the press and interested citizens.

WELCOME

Mr. Rodriguez and Mr. Keller welcomed everyone to the joint meeting. Mr. Keller introduced Jon Leshar and Donna Fabry, Montgomery County Planning Commission, to present the final draft of the Sustainability Plan. The goal of tonight's presentation is to adopt the final draft as presented.

SUSTAINABILITY PLAN PRESENTATION

Jon Leshar, Montgomery County Planner and Manager of the Sustainability Plan, gave a brief description of the plan and the development process.

Donna Fabry, Montgomery County Community Planner, reviewed the final draft and highlights from the plan. Each entity has its own individual actions as well as joint actions that are the core of the plan. Examples were presented for joint and individual entities including a "Report Card" that tracks the progress of various actions. She explained that grant applications can be cited as actions and implementations of the plan. The Montco 2040 has a grant program for implementation projects. This year the county has \$1.5 million to award to communities throughout the county. The focus is on three areas that are addressed in the Sustainability Plan. Applications are due March 1<sup>st</sup>. The average award is \$100,000; maximum is \$200,000. Ms. Fabry requested the adoption of the plan.

Mr. Rodriguez stated that both the school district and borough recommend the adoption of the plan as presented.

Mrs. Francis called for a motion to approve the final draft of the sustainability plan.

It was moved by Mr. Williams and seconded by Ms. Bearden that the board approve the Sustainability Plan as presented.

Upon roll call vote, all members voted aye. Ayes: Seven. Nays: None. Absent: Two. Motion carried.

President Weand asked Council for a motion to approve the Sustainability Plan.

Motion by Council Procsal and seconded by Councilor to approve the final draft of the Sustainability Plan as presented.

Councilor Arms opposed. His concern is sustaining programs when the funding run outs. He feels financial concern is important.

Roll call vote:	Arms	- no	Paez	- no
	Kulp	- yes	Procsal	- yes
	Weand	- yes	Lebedynsky	- yes

Motion carried: 4 ayes, 2 nays.

### ROTARY TREE NURSERY PROJECT

Mr. Rodriguez gave a brief summary of a proposed tree nursery that was introduced to the school board a few months ago. He introduced Tom Hylton and Deb Penrod to speak on behalf of the Rotary Club and the proposed municipal tree nursery.

Deb Penrod gave an overview of the Rotary Club, memberships, sponsorships and various fundraising efforts. Six components of the Rotary mission are: disease prevention, clean water, maternal and child health, peace, literacy and economic and community development. This year marks the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary for the Pottstown Rotary with a Gala event scheduled for February 10<sup>th</sup>. A goal of the rotary club is to plant 100 trees by Earth Day, April 22<sup>nd</sup>. Ms. Penrod introduced Tom Hylton to speak on the Rotary Tree Nursery project to coincide with the Earth Day plant a tree challenge.

Mr. Hylton gave a Power Point presentation on the proposed tree nursery to be planted on the old basketball courts located behind the Pottstown High School. Ground preparation would include removing some asphalt, adding top soil and connecting a water line for soaker hoses. The proposed municipal tree nursery would be privately funded, no cost to the school district. The anticipated schedule would be to begin the planting process in March. The growing time is five years at which time the trees would be ready for transplanting in municipal and school district areas. Questions were welcomed.

Questions asked: 1) the types of trees to be planted and 2) maintenance and water consumption.

Mr. Hylton named a variety of trees to be ordered. He noted that little maintenance is required and mentioned a local resident has volunteered to assist in any maintenance. Mr. Hylton stated that water consumption is anticipated to cost approximately \$150 per year and talked about installing a timer to the water line.

### P.A.I.D. Update

Peggy Lee-Clark, Executive Director of Pottstown Area Industrial Development, gave a Power Point on the 2017 Annual P.A.I.D. Report. The draft report presented tonight does not include the financials. The audit report will be available in a few weeks. Ms. Lee-Clark reported that the employment potential for 2017 engagements was 97. The number of companies engaged were 37. Two larger projects that are moving forward are: 1) Cedarville Engineering expanding to utilize the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> floor of the BB&T Bank building at 159 E High Street; 2) Keystone Employment and Economic Plan (KEEP) concept plan will be presented to the Borough and West Pottsgrove in February. Ms. Lee-Clark stated that Pottstown was one of 248 applicants for the Amazon satellite

location. Although not chosen, she feels other potential growth could stem from the visibility of the application. P.A.I.D is funding two feasibility studies that should be completed by mid-February. The studies should provide guidance on targeting high technical work forces conducive to the Pottstown area. Other endeavors include collaboration with PDIDA and Hobart's Run and "I Pick Pottstown" initiative to engage the community and promote new businesses in the area.

### LAND BANK ORDINANCE

Justin Keller presented a Power Point presentation outlining the development, purpose and basic structure of a Land Bank program. The program is geared towards more residential than commercial properties with goals to eliminate blighted properties, stabilize neighborhoods, promote home ownership and strengthen the tax base. The Land Bank is governed by a Board of Directors appointed by Council. He reviewed operating principles, policy, procedure, and funding options. Mr. Keller explained the funding options include municipal contributions, grants, proceeds from sales/leases and 50% of the real estate tax revenues up to 5 years. The next step is to draft an intergovernmental agreement between the county, school district and borough.

Mr. Rodriguez recapped the previous school board's support of the Land Bank program and asked for the Board's direction to have the solicitors review the ordinance to move forward with the program.

Ms. Bearden voiced her concern regarding total forgiveness of the liens. She suggested setting a percentage to be paid by the owner. Her concerns centered on accountability and not setting a loop hole for new owners.

It was determined that the school district and borough solicitors would review the Land Bank Ordinance for any potential loop holes and Mr. Weand noted that the ordinance could be amended at any time should there be an occurrences.

### WALK BIKE POTTSTOWN UPDATE

Justin Keller gave an update on the Walk Bike Pottstown. Phase 3, sidewalk replacements, is near completion. Line stripping has been delayed to weather conditions and other projects within the borough. The project should be completed by this summer. The borough recognizes the need for public education and has been working together with the school district, police department and county health department along with the Greater Valley Forge Transportation Management Association on a grant request from the Pottstown Area Health and Wellness Foundation to educate adults and children. Some ideas to help with educating students include a bike challenge with incentives, presentations to students and parents, maps, signage along the route and a bike rodeo. Questions were welcomed.

Mrs. Francis inquired about more bike racks.

Mr. Williams and Mrs. Francis inquired about safety measures for the bicyclists on the routes and trails.

Mr. Keller noted that there is not specific funding in the grant for additional racks but could possibly incorporate into the grant, funds to re-secure the existing bike racks. He noted that the areas will have reflectors as specified by the Federal Highway Administration standards for guiderails and trails.

Mr. Rodriguez spoke about promoting the Walk Bike project. He encouraged all to lead by example by using the bike trail whenever possible.

## ROUND TABLE

Mr. Armato recognizes that sustainability is a challenge and he looks to how we are going to be sustainable after the grants are acquired. He noted that all presentations shared a theme of promoting a positive image of Pottstown. The school district shares in this theme and an example of this a publication “Pottstown Pride” that is posted on all of the district’s social media platforms.

Mr. Rose appreciated the presentations made tonight.

Vice-President Kulp noted the information presented was very informative, good representation and she looks forward to future meetings.

Ms. Bearden thanked the presenters for their presentations. She noted as a native of Pottstown she is extremely supportive of the town. Her objective is to ask questions that lead to longevity and not stagnation, to move forward successfully.

Mr. Williams was pleased with everything that got accomplished at tonight’s meeting and the representation from both entities. He encouraged continuing liaisons at each board meeting.

Councilor Paez appreciated the good information that was shared.

Councilor Porscal congratulated the new school board members on their recent election. He agreed with Mr. Williams comments.

Mayor Henrick thanked the representatives and presenters for sharing information and the collaborative efforts by everyone to get things accomplished. She looks forward to the next joint meeting.

Mr. Keller noted the borough is still working on a final budget. A special exception was made to adopt a final budget with a deadline of February 15<sup>th</sup>.

Mr. Rodriguez spoke about the district’s work to make the district efficient and environmentally friendly that connects to the sustainability plan. He noted many things are happening in the district available to the public including sports events and the upcoming district musical scheduled in March.

President Weand thanked everyone for attending. He spoke about the difficult process of preparing a balanced budget. He stressed the need to raise the assessed value to achieve sustainability.

Mrs. Weand thanked everyone for a great, positive meeting. She reminded the board there will be an executive session at the close of the meeting.

It was moved by Mr. Williams and seconded by Ms. Bearden that the meeting adjourns. All in favor. None opposed. The meeting adjourned at 9:45 pm.

## SCHOOL BOARD EXECUTIVE SESSION FOR THE PURPOSE OF LITIGATION.